

R E M A R K S

Careful consideration has been given to the Official Action of May 2, 2006, and reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

Drawings

It is acknowledged that the drawings have been accepted by the Examiner.

Specification

The specification has been amended to provide a section heading for the "Field of the Invention" as required by the Examiner. Additionally, the specification has been amended to correct the term "friction seal(s)" to - - friction lining(s) - - as the latter is more in keeping with acceptable terminology.

Claim Objections

Claim 5 has been amended to overcome the objection noted by the Examiner.

Claim Disposition

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-6 under 35 USC 102 as being anticipated by EP (0898096) to Gambini.

Claims 7 and 8 have been indicated as containing allowable subject matter.

Claim Amendments

Claim 1 has been amended to include subject matter from claims 6 and 7.

Additionally, the claim has been amended to delete some inapt language and present the claim in acceptable U.S. form.

The claims currently pending for consideration are claims 1-7.

Claim 1 now recites that the centrifugal actuating device and the speed adjusting device include respective sets of weights which define the first and second threshold values, respectively.

Gambini (EP0898096) does not disclose first and second sets of weights, each defining a respective threshold value. Gambini does not even disclose a single set of weights which are connected to the shaft in a rotationally rigid manner.

Rather Gambini discloses a plurality of loose masses (22) which are contained inside a piston chamber and act on a push member (piston 23); these masses cannot produce first and second threshold values as claimed. In fact, the masses start to exert an axial force on piston 23 once the speed is sufficient to "centrifuge" the masses to the outer area of the piston chamber as shown in the bottom part of the figure of the cited reference. In this respect, a first threshold value does exist. However, once the centrifugal device is active, no further threshold value is defined. The axial force on piston 23 increases as a function of rotational speed and progressively pushes the movable half-pulley towards the fixed half-pulley, thus "squeezing" the belt outwardly.

According to the present invention as claimed, a first centrifugal device, having its

own centrifugal (auxiliary) weights, controls the clutch means so as to set the clutch means to a torque transmission position in response to an angular speed greater than a first threshold value, and the speed adjusting device, having its own centrifugal (main) weights, controls the relative distance between the two half pulley starting from a second speed threshold value (defined by the main weights) which is higher than the first threshold value.

Gambini has a single centrifugal device whose axial force first sets the clutch means in a torque transmitting configuration and then regulates the transmission ratio of the pulley; this axial force increases continuously as a function of speed.


Conversely, in the present invention as claimed, the second threshold can be set appropriately higher than the first threshold, so as to ensure that the response to engine speed is more regular, particularly at low engine speeds (this is explained well in the introductory part of the specification).

Conclusion

In view of the above action and comments it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 as now amended is allowable over Gambini and the other which has been cited. Claims 2-7 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1 and thereby are deemed to be allowable therewith.

Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the claims is therefore earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julian H. Cohen', is written over a horizontal line.

Julian H. Cohen
Ladas & Parry LLP
26 West 61st Street
New York, New York 10023
Reg.No. 20302 Tel.No.(212) 708-1887